THE MYSTERY OF INIQUITY Anatomized.

BY

WILLIAM DILLINGHAM, D.D.

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For the Mystery of Iniquity doth already work. 2 Thessal. 2. 7.

Lib. Theo. Emeolni ex dono Authoris

LONDON,

Printed for *Jonathan Robinson* at the Golden-Lion in St. *Paul's* Church-yard, MDCLXXXIX.

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OF

INIQUITY

Unfolded.

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BIBLIOTECA BODLEIANA

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THE Myſtery of INIQUITY ANATOMIZED.

WHEN in the Fulneſs of time the Son of God (the ſecond Perſon in the bleſſed Trinity) did aſſume humane Nature, uniting it in the ſame Perſon with his Divine Nature, that being God-man he might redeem Mankind, and ſave his People from their Sins, and inſtate them in a bleſſed condition to all Eternity; he was born of a Virgin, and with ſuch other wonderful Circumſtances, as might well give Satan a juſt Apprehenſion that this was *He*, whom all the Prophets had foretold, and God had from the beginning of the World promiſed under the notion of *the Seed of the Woman*, that ſhould break the Serpents Head; diſappoint all his malicious Deſigns againſt the Glory of God and Mans Salvation, and undo the Work of the Devil; utterly deſtroying his infernal Kingdom, which he had long exerciſed over fallen Mankind: Which he being ſenſible of, thought it concerned him to beſtir himſelf to the utmoſt; and to ſtir up all his Malice, Power and Subtlety (if it were poſſible) to prevent it.

And therefore in the firſt place he ſought to take away the Life of our Saviour, and that betimes; that ſo his being incarnate might ſignify nothing: This he attempted by *Herod*'s means, putting a Jealouſy into his Head, that his Kingdom would be indangered by one, who was at his very Birth beſpoken and *proclaimed the King of the Jews*: that ſo by *Herod*'s Jealouſy for his Kingdom, he might eaſe himſelf of the Fears which tormented him of loſing his own.

But that Truſt being put by through the Providence of God, his real, and the care of *Joſeph*, his reputed Father, Satan found himſelf ſo manacled by the Divine Power, that he could make no more Aſſaults upon his Perſon, than God was pleaſed to permit him. Wherefore for above thirty Years we find not that he made any At-

tempt upon him. But God did then give way to his boiling Malice to ſet upon him by Temptations. And though perhaps he had but ſmall hopes of prevailing, yet in a deſperate Caſe he reſolved to put it to the puſh in hopes of a Poſſibility, and therefore he thought if he could by any means draw him to Sin, then he would be his own in Fetters, and in no Capacity to deliver others out of thoſe Chains of Darkneſs, wherein himſelf ſhould be held his Priſoner. But when he ſaw that no Temptation could enter; but that the blow did ever recoil upon his own head (which was ſtill wounded by that Sword of the Spirit, the ſame Word of God, which had fatally denounced his Deſtruction) he then did more ſenſibly perceive that Chriſt was more than his Match, and more than Man; and conſequently the Perſon deſigned for the ruine of his Kingdom; and therefore *he departed from him for a ſeaſon*, hoping ſtill for a more favourable Conjuncture in time to come: but he found himſelf in the mean while going down the Wind apace, being daily diſpoſſeſſed and caſt out of one Gariſon after another, and that a whole Legion were unable to man one ſingle Man, to hold out againſt his Almighty Word and Command. He found that Sins were forgiven, Diſeaſes cured, and ſome Dead were raiſed, and many believed on him, returning to the Obedience of their Maker, being convinced by his Heavenly Doctrine, and perfectly Holy Converſation, and the unreſiſtible Power of his miraculous Works; againſt which he found himſelf unable to bear up. Yet between Rage and Deſpair he filled the Hearts of the Jews with all Miſchief, making them to blaſpheme and revile him; charging him in particular to be a Blaſphemer againſt God, *i. e.* himſelf; and (which was a notable fetch) that he was confederate with the Devil, by whom yet themſelves ſpake and acted all. This our Saviour did refute, to the confuſion of all his Accuſers. But the Devils and their Malice ceaſed not until after many baffled Attempts, they did at laſt (according to the determinate Counſel of God, permitting and ordering it) bring him to a cruel and ignominious Death. For *He was numbred with the Tranſgreſſors.*

Now was it that Satan began to triumph, as if he had wholly broken all God's Meaſures, and ſecured his own Kingdom from ſo dangerous an Attack. But the Death of Chriſt in ſuch a manner was the very way and means, whereby God had fore-appointed to bring about his great Work for his own Glory and Mans Salvation, through the ruin of Satan's Kingdom; to which himſelf did cooperate by his own utmoſt Power, Malice and Subtilty, and by all the

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Inſtruments that he could make: Thus the Wiſdom of the Father did turn the Subtilty of the Serpent into the greateſt piece of Folly that ever was in the World.

And this the Devil ſoon became apprehenſive of; and therefore applied all his Arts to hinder the after-game, and recruit of a Reſurrection; which would prove the greateſt Miracle of all, and would at once revive and confirm all the Doctrine which Chriſt had taught, and ſo become more dangerous than all the reſt, if he ſhould have his Priſon, the Grave, broken open (for he had the Power of Death) and the Keys thereof raviſhed from him by a ſtronger hand. And when he could not hinder the thing, he indeavoured to ſtifle it in ſilence, that it might not be known unto the World; and for this purpoſe he retained the Jews to be his Brokers, who ſuborned the Souldiers with large Mony; but all in vain. For the Sun would riſe in deſpight of Clouds, which ſeemed to obſtruct him; and being up, did ſoon diſpel thoſe Miſts which the Devil had raiſed, and by the powerful Beams of his Doctrine, and the miraculous Works taught and wrought by the Mouths and Hands of his Apoſtles, did proclaim to all the World that he was riſen, and ſo had led Captivity captive, and both received and diſpenſed ſuch Gifts unto Men, and Graces alſo, as were like to lead the whole World in Triumph after him. While Satan's Oracles were nonpluſs'd, his Altars caſt down, his Worſhippers converted, his Schoolmens Books burnt, and all his Cheats laid open to the view of all Men.

Thus Chriſt went on conquering and to conquer, reſcuing his People from their Sins, looſing the Bands and Fetters of Sin, and putting on them other Chains, the Golden Chains of Grace and Gratitude, the moſt potent Obligations to love God, and to yield him new Obedience.

In the mean while, neither the Devil's Malice nor Subtlety were idle; for in purſuance of the firſt he reſolved never to give over perſecuting the Church of Chriſt, both Teachers and others; making uſe at firſt of the Jewiſh Nation, and by them fermenting the Heathen World into the utmoſt Rage againſt the Chriſtian Faith, and the Profeſſors of it. And though he has been much reſtrained from doing what he deſired, yet hath he never wholly ceaſed Day nor Night from oppoſing, vexing, tempting, perſecuting and accuſing them to God and Man.

But in the mean while he ſummoned up all the Methods and Devices which his Subtlity and long Experience, whetted with Malice-

lice and Rage, could suggest unto him. And at length he thought it a matter feasible, that seeing there was no stemming the Tide of the Gospel, nor preventing the whole World from becoming Christian; he might at least seem to resign his Kingdom, and to be dead of his Wound, by suffering Mankind to comply with the Gospel in an outward Profession, while they reserved their Lusts and Corruptions unmortified; whereby he should still retain them under his Power, and as certainly destroy them, as in the times of Paganism he had done. Which he thought he might accomplish the more securely, because under a Cloak and Pretext of Compliance with Christ and his Kingdom, he should establish his own in the Hearts and Lives of the far greater part, even of such as should make Profession of the Christian Faith; holding them still fast in Sin and Error, which they should retain in Mystery and Disguise. And which was still more, he hoped so far to prevail himself of the Gospel, and to debauch the Christian Religion and Worship, as to pervert the most Holy Principles and Practices of it, and make them become the most refined and effectual means to carry on a Mystery of Iniquity, which is no other than his own Kingdom new modelled, and of the last Edition.

For he conceived it not altogether impossible, to make some Men, out of a blind Devotion unto Christ, instead of worshipping his Person, to adore and give Divine Honour to every thing that had any relation to him, from the Manger to the Cross; and all this out of the meer Honour, which they should pretend to bear unto him. So should they through a blind mistake, instead of his Person, fasten their Devotion on his Garments, thereby losing both their Saviour and their Souls together.

And the subtile Spirit did well understand that the earthly Mind of corrupted Nature, would be very prone to terminate its Acts (even the most Religious) upon some sensible or present Object which it finds it self best able to master and comprehend; and therefore he craftily put Men upon devising other than the true Objects of Worship. Which being their own Creatures, they would easily become so fond of, as to fancy them into God's; and give them Divine Worship; or semi-Divine, and so ill distinguished, as that it should easily slide and melt into it.

He understood well that the way to establish his own Kingdom was to lesson that of Christ's; which might be effected by dividing his Worship, and parcelling it out among many other Participants; whereby his due Honour and Worship (which is his Tribute and Revenue)

venue) would be lessoned and imbezil'd; as is a great River by being sliced into many petty Channels. And therefore he would not only put Men upon worshipping *Christ's* Appurtenances, instead of his Person: but also make them give their Worship unto *Saints*, because of their Holiness, and their Sufferings for *Jesus Christ*: wherein they should make account they paid no small Honour unto Christ himself, while they gave it to others for his Sake. And unto *Angels* likewise, those menial Servants of his, who minister daily for the good of his Saints. Both these they should make their Mediatours unto *Christ*, or unto God, next way; and that not only of Prayer and Intercession, but also of Merit and Satisfaction, however they should strive to mince the Matter. For the Honour and Worship they should give, should be no other than that which is due to Christ alone, and to God himself. *Jesus Christ* is the *only high Priest* of his Church; *who, by the Sacrifice of himself, once offered upon the Cross, hath perfected for ever them that are Sanctified*, Heb. 10. 14. Yet *Satan* will have him Crucified again and again, even as often as the Sacrament is celebrated; which *Christ* had instituted only as a Memorial of his Death and Passion. And while they did this, they should give Divine Worship to that which by Nature is not God, but Bread; though it be, by being blessed according to Christ's holy Institution, invested with Sacramental and Mystical Privileges, becoming the Sign to represent, a Seal to confirm, and an Instrument to convey *Christ* and all his Benefits unto believing Souls. But, as if it were the very natural Body of *Jesus Christ* united, together with his Soul, unto his Divine Nature in the Hypostatical Union, they should give unto it the Divine Worship properly due unto that Person, for the Sake only of the Godhead dwelling in him, and compounding him.

Now the Devil knew that they being mistaken in their Judgment of the Thing they should Worship, would become guilty of real Idolatry. And thus should be pervert that Ordinance which *Christ* instituted for his own Honour, and the Union, Comfort, and Salvation of his faithful Servants; and turn it unto *Christ's* Dishonour, by Idolatry, into Schism and Contention, and the Persecution of the Faithful, and Damnation of many Thousands, who should thereby be made Idolaters.

And while God's Worship is thus given to the Creatures [*Rev.* 9. 20.] and their Images, and unto God by his Images; *Satan* knew that, however Men might direct and superscribe it, God would never accept of it, having declared his Mind to the contrary; and

ſo of Courſe all muſt fall to his Share, as waved and eſcheated, [1 *Cor.* 10. 20, 21.] For God will be worſhipped alone, and he will not give his Honour to another. And *Jeſus Chriſt* is jealous of his own Prerogative, being the *only Mediator* between God and Man; and takes himſelf to be ſlighted by ſuch as go about to piece out his Satisfaction [as if it were defective, and inſufficient] by humane Penances and Merits. He is the *only High Prieſt* of his Church; and he is our *alone Interceſſor*, who can by his own Merits, of infinite Value, prevail with his Heavenly Father, and obtain at his Hand all Bleſſings, and eternal Life for all his elect Members, and recommend their Petitions, put up in his Name, and perfumed by the incenſe of his own Merits, ſo that they ſhall not fail of Acceptance and a gracious Audience. And his love to his Church is ſo great, that he is very jealous, and takes it ill, that ſhe ſhould wave his Interceſſion, or not come immediately to him through a kind of diffidence of his Love to Her (though pretending unworthineſs, Humility, and to exalt his Honour thereby) but direct her Petitions to her Fellow-Creatures (though to be handed to him) who can neither know nor help her.

And for his *Prophetical Office*, the Devil contrived to invade that, by ſtifling the Evangelical Law, locking it up in an unknown Tongue, ſuppreſſing part of it, and adding to it by Writing and Oral Tradition, on pretence of its being an inſufficient Rule and Direction for Mans Salvation, without the Addition of ſuch Things as ſhould, in Truth, ſubvert and contradict it; and by giving it ſuch a gloſs as ſhould be ſure to corrupt the Text, which he hoped to make uncontroulable, if he could ſo bring it about, as that all Corruptions both in Doctrine and Worſhip might be made incurable by a perſuaſion in the Minds of Men that the Propoſer and Director of them was aſſiſted by an infallible Spirit, and could not Err; and had received a Power of Diſpenſing with the Law of God it ſelf, and that there were ſtill on Foot a Power of working Divine Miracles employed for the Confirmation of his Doctrines.

And then for his *Kingly Office*, the Devil would raiſe up ſuch an one, which ſhould pretend to a *Donatio Chriſti*, as well as *Conſtantini*, which ſhould inveſt him with a Power both in Spirituals and Temporals equal to that of *Chriſt* himſelf; and therefore make him his Deputy and Plenipotentiary even unto Adoration [2 *Theſ.* 2. 4.] or if that ſhould fail, the Devil had one ready ſealed, which he had made tenders of to *Jeſus Chriſt*: Luke 4. 6, 7. upon a certain Condition; and though he rejected it with Scorn and Abhorrence, yet he

he doubted not to find one, who would thankfully accept of it; the Draught whereof was already entred among the Divine Records, and his bold Claim to it then made ſhould be a ſufficient Evidence of his Right. But becauſe the Men of the World were like to be ſomething ſtiff and refractory to part with their Temporal Rights and Poſſeſſions; therefore he ſhould content himſelf with what he could get for the preſent, for fear of Knocks; yet giving away Kingdoms to thoſe, who would adventure for them, (which giving, ſhould prove his Right to retain or diſpoſe of them) and depoſing whom he durſt of thoſe, who would not allow him Power to diſpoſe of their Temporals in order to his Spirituals, which himſelf ſhould claim to be the ſole Judg of. One that ſhould, in purſuance of this Claim, pretend to pardon Mens Sins againſt the Law of God, and erect a Purgatory, or Priſon, for Offenders, whereof himſelf ſhould keep the Key on the ſame Bunch with thoſe of Heaven and Hell, which he ſhould pretend to wear always at his Girdle. One, who ſhould exerciſe Dominion over Mens Faith and Conſciences, minting new Articles of Faith at his Pleaſure, to be believed by them under no leſs pain then eternal Damnation.

Thus *Satan* thought it a thing not altogether unpoſſible for him to ſupplant and defeat Chriſt in all his Offices, and thereby degrade him from that Honour wherein his Father had inveſted him; who had given him a Name above every Name, that the Angels of God ſhould worſhip him, and that to his Power and Authority every Knee ſhould bow; that his Humane Nature, as exiſting in his Perſon, and his Perſon as God-Man, and conſiſting partly of his humane Nature, ſhould become the Object of Divine Adoration, his humane Nature being aſſumed into that high Priviledg and Prerogative of partaking of that Worſhip, which God will not ſuffer to be given to any that is not God; and alſo that all Acts of Grace ſhould be diſpenſed unto the Church as the alone purchaſe of his Merit, and at his ſole Inſtance and Interceſſion.

And if *Satan* could but gain this Point and Deſign upon the Perſon and Offices of *Chriſt*, he hoped to lay his Faith and Religion low enough, and in a great meaſure to defeat the great Deſign of the Goſpel, the Salvation of Mens Souls. Which he ſhould the more eaſily hereby retain under his Command, and keep them ſtill in their Sins and natural Corruptions. Which that he might cheriſh and inflame to the utmoſt, under the myſterious Covert of the Chriſtian Profeſſion, he caſt about how he might make Proviſion for the Fleſh, to improve the Corruptions of Humane Nature unto their utmoſt Pitch and Aſm-

And therefore he contrived it ſo, as that the Profeſſion of Religion ſhould not hinder, but rather promote the injoyment of all worldly Honours, Riches, and ſenſual Pleaſures; the Luſt of the Fleſh, the Luſt of the Eye, and the Pride of Life. That Men might purſue their Pride and Ambition, their Covetouſneſs of Riches and Poſſeſſions, and their earthly and carnal Pleaſures and Delights; and yet all the while go for good Chriſtians, abuſing others, and perhaps themſelves alſo, into a fooliſh Perſuaſion, that they were in the firſt rank of thoſe who ſhould be ſaved.

The firſt of theſe Corruptions is *Pride*, which being the Devil's firſt-born, and the principal Maſter-Lineament of his Image, wherewith he had poiſoned Humane Nature at the firſt, and being the main Root of all Rebellion and Apoſtacy from God, he took a ſpecial Care for its Accommodation in this new Model of his Kingdom. And therefore when Men had taken upon them the Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Faith, and brought along with them high thoughts of themſelves, of the acuteneſs of their Reaſon, and the Αὐτεξούσιον, or uncontroulable Freedom of their Will, (both which the way of believing and taking things upon God's ſole Authority, and the neceſſity of the Grace of God for the Sanctification of the Heart and ſaving of the Soul, ſeemed to croſs and mortify) the Devil gratified them in this by ſetting up Opinions of Religion to the ſame effect. Which have proved a Seminary of moſt of the Hereſies, which afterward infected the Church of God for many Ages; as proceeding from a corrupt Self-Love, or love of corrupted Self, and ſetting up Mans Underſtanding and Will againſt thoſe of God, whereby Men became ἄτακτοι, & ἀνυπεύθυνοι, no longer ſubject to him.

Mens *Reaſon* was entertained with Notions contrary to the myſterious Truths of the Goſpel, called by the Apoſtle *the Myſtery of Godlineſs*; The bleſſed Trinity of Perſons in the Unity of the Divine Eſſence, and the Union of the two Natures in the Perſon of *Jeſus Chriſt*; God manifeſted in the Fleſh; Our Redemption by his Death, and Juſtification by Faith in him; Sanctification by his Word and Spirit; the Reſurrection of the Body; and ſuch like. And their proud *Wills* were ſtroaked and ſoothed with an opinion of Merit, and the ſelf-ſufficiency of Natures Stock, without being beholden to God for Goſpel-Grace.

But the main and top-branch of Pride did ſhew it ſelf in ὑπεροχῇ, in the aſſerting of a Superiority and appearing on the top of other Men.

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Therefore to gratify this Ambition, he reſolved firſt to make uſe of thoſe Eminencies, which he found in the Conſtitution of the Church. *Chriſt* himſelf gave ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtors and Teachers, *Eph.* 4. 11. So that there wanted not Gifts and Offices, which Men of *Demetrius* his Complexion, who loved the Preeminency, might pretend and aſpire unto.

And if this were not enough to ſatisfie their Ambition, they might build themſelves higher Stories by drawing Diſciples after them [*Acts* 20. 30.] and ſo heading of Sects and Colonies: or by uſurping, and lording it over God's heritage; [1 *Pet.* 5. 3.] and not only over the *Plebs Chriſtiana*, but alſo over all thoſe Orders and Powers, which *Chriſt* had planted in his Church; and raiſe themſelves up to a Soveraignty over all others of their Brethren, and become Univerſal Biſhops of the whole Church of *Chriſt* on Earth, and Oecumenical Rulers in matters relating to *Chriſt* and his Kingdom.

But the Devil might eaſily foreſee, that, when he ſhould ſtart this game, there were like to be many pretenders; at leaſt many, who thinking themſelves of equal Power, and as capable as others, of ſuch a Prelation, would be glad to have it, if there muſt be one: but all could not be gratified with one place, ſo that there muſt needs be a *Simultas* of more Competitors.

This affectation of Empire ſhould firſt lift up its Head in the Eaſtern Church, but at length prevail in the Weſt, after it had been decried and ſeverely cenſured there as Antichriſtian.

For ſo great an Authority to be lodged in one Perſon, there was no pretext could be made ſo plauſible; as to hold Vicegerent under *Chriſt Jeſus*; of *whom the whole Family of Heaven and Earth is named*; *who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords: to whom all Power was given by the Father in Heaven and Earth.* But that this new Spiritual Monarch might not ſeem to be the firſt in the Claim, he was to pretend to be the Succeſſor of St. *Peter* the Apoſtle, for whoſe Inveſtiture and Inſtitution he was to combate the Goſpel, and to find it out there; though neither *Peter* himſelf, nor St. *Paul* have any thing like it in their Epiſtles; and the Primitive Fathers and Councils were ſtiff againſt it, eſpecially the moſt ancient of them; who by their Canons, and Carriage, and Writings, ſeem not to have had any belief that any particular See on Earth was their ſole Soveraign Lord and Emperor in *Spiritualibus*. But to ſilence all ſuch Gainſayers, both ancient and modern, in this and all other matters;

he ſhould claim the Authority of infallible interpretation of Scriptures and Fathers; whom having firſt garbled, and cut out the Tongues of many of them, that ſpake againſt him, he ſhould infallibly pronounce to be all for him; Notwithſtanding that the moſt conſiderable part of Chriſtianity might judge and know the contrary.

But that this his Empire and Soveraign Dominion might not be thought the effect of Pride and Arrogance, ſo contrary to the precept and example of *Jeſus Chriſt*, (whoſe Vicar he ſhould pretend to be) and ſo expoſe him to the envy of others; he ſhould cloak it under the humble Title of *Servus Servorum* (tho he ſhould carry it liker *Dominus Dominantium*) and in humility ſeal *Annulo Piſcatoris*, with the Ring and Seal of St. *Peter* the Fiſher-Man Apoſtle; who yet perhaps never had any ſuch thing.

But be it as it will, it is reſolved that a Prince he ſhall be [*Rev.* 13. 1, 11, 12, 14.] but alas! what's a Prince *in Cuerpo* alone, without welt or guard; without a Court, a Council, and a Guard? eſpecially if he want both perſonal Wiſdom, Learning and Vertue to recommend him to his Subjects, and protect him from Affront, Envy and Contempt? It was therefore thought fit in the next Conſult, That there ſhould be a convenient number raiſed out of the Clergy to uphold the Myſtery (though of inferiour rank at firſt) till the ſtate ſhould be formed and come into requeſt, by ſuitable Power and Riches; and receive ſome conſiderable Addreſs from the reſt of the World. Hereby the Empire would riſe by Degrees, and at length be able to invite Politick Heads from Noble and Princely Families, and entertain the Minds of ſuch of the Clergy, whoſe Advantages ſhould tempt them to aſpire to the ſupreme Dignity, and for the preſent quiet their pretentions in hopes of obtaining, when there ſhould a favourable Conjuncture offer it ſelf. And ith mean while they would be true to the See, which they might hope in time would be their own; and enjoy all the moſt ſublimated exerciſes of their Wits and Luſts; and all this under the Myſtery and pretence of adminiſtring the Spiritual Kingdom of *Jeſus Chriſt* for the Salvation of Mens Souls, and the Glory of God the Father.

And for this end the Revenues of the Church (given and devoted by pious Chriſtians to God, for the Maintenance of his true Worſhip and Relief of his poor Children) muſt be amaſſed upon theſe ſpiritual Courtiers, to enable them to maintain a Port becoming the Children of Pride, and provide Fuel for their burning Luſts; while the Churches, whoſe Titles they ſhould wear, would be

be pilled by them, and the care of Souls neglected, and Religion betrayed. And becauſe Biſhopricks and Eccleſiaſtical Benefices would prove an inſufficient Fund for their occaſions; therefore there were other Proviſions to be made, as we ſhall ſee hereafter.

But neither Court nor State can ſubſiſt in Proſperity and Reputation without Dependents, Intelligence, Forces, and Means to ſupport them. All which might very eaſily be ſupplied by the means of Prieſts, Miſſionaries, and other Perſons, under the Myſtery of Religion.

As for *Dependents*, the getting into their Hands the Diſpoſal of all Eccleſiaſtical Benefices, and Church-Revenues, would give them an Opportunity of boring through the Ears of many Millions, and of making them their Vaſſals; while ſo many whole Orders in their vaſt Number of Monaſteries, and all their Members, Tenents and Retinue, yea and Revenues alſo, would, upon occaſion, be at their Devotion and Command.

And for *Intelligence*, there might be a ſelect Number of Prieſts of choiceſt Abilities ſent into the Courts of Princes; who under pretence of being helpful to their Souls, by preaching, directing, and confeſſing them, ſhould be able to diſcover their greateſt Secrets, and moſt private Counſels; and be under an Oath to diſcover them unto the Governors of the State Eccleſiaſtick. And others alſo in prodigious Numbers might be ſent into all Nations, who ſhould be Eye-Witneſſes of what is done by Men of all Conditions, and have a Key into their Hearts and Conſciences, ſo that not ſo much as a Thought ſhould ſtir, but it ſhould come to their Knowledg, and be under their Management and Diſpoſal. And all under pretence of taking care of their Souls. Others under pretence of voluntary Poverty, ſhould not only abuſe the Charity of ignorant People, but as they beg, pry into their Families, obſerve their private Behaviours, Company and Acquaintance, their Abilities, and the ſeveral Degrees of their Devotion to Eccleſiaſtical Intereſt. Beſides theſe, thoſe of the myſtical Council, being pick'd out as Perſons of Intereſt from ſeveral Nations, and ſome out of Princely Families, whoſe Secrets and Intereſts they are acquainted with, or by their Friends and Acquaintance can eaſily come to the Knowledg of. Theſe, I ſay, can ſupply Intelligence, how every Vein and Artery of any State and Kingdom, and almoſt of every ſingle Perſon in them, doth beat.

As for *Forces*, Though the Temporal Princes are too wiſe to ſuffer this Empire to have its Armies, Gariſons, and Caſtles, its Forts

Forts and Citadels in the Heart and Bowels of their Dominions; yet in effect it should have all these in Mystery, in the Monasteries listed under the Banner of Prayers, as if they had no other Weapons, which they could or would use. But these would be able to raise their Tenents, and list themselves, when occasion should serve, (as they have done sometimes) and a numerous Swarm of Priests might be ready, at the Signal given, to animate the Subjects against their Prince, and by laying an Interdict or Imbargo upon the publick Worship of God, provoke them to join with them in a Rebellion. Whereby all Princes should have but precarious Titles to, and Possessions of their Kingdoms, and no firm footing in the Hearts of their Subjects to trust unto, but lie at the Mercy, Pleasure, and Disposal of this Universal Spiritual Monarch.

And for the support of those mighty Armies, through the cheating of Confessors, and the Ignorance of People, their Charity might be fooled into a conceit of buying Heaven, as it were by Bill of Exchange; and by parting with their Lands to maintain a Company of lazy and vile Persons, who should subsist by a Pretence of the Efficacy of their Prayers to God and special Interest in him.

Whereby a great part of the Revenue of a Nation would be either exported or mispent at home, or else imployed to the weakening of the Prince and Nation; and sometimes imployed against them both: who would also hereby be enervated both by Superstition, and by the want of those who should defend them.

But to say no more of this Spiritual Monarchy, nor the Ambition and Polity of it; there remained two other Particulars, wherein carnal Minds were to be gratified, in which the Gospel of Christ designed to mortify them; *Luxury, and Covetousness*, or *Worldly-mindedness*.

And as for the first of them, a Provision might be made that all the Pleasures of Sense might be enjoyed to the full, and that under a pretence of shunning and disclaiming them, *viz.* by the Doctrines of a celibate or single Life, and that of *Fasting*, and such like other pretended Mortifications of the Flesh. But such Restraints being of meer humane Institution, which could not make them confer Grace, would probably but inflame the Disease, instead of curing it, and (like Water on Lime, or Oyl on Fire) increase the Heat, and inrage the Distemper. Yet the Clergy were to be interdicted lawful Marriage, though honourable and of Divine Institution; and that too, as if it were such a defiling thing, and altogether inconsistent with the Holiness of Priests, and the Perfection of Devotion,

tion, and therefore to be forbidden [1 *Tim.* 4. 3.] and vowed againſt (but in truth, leſt the Expences of a Family ſhould hinder the Subſiſtence, and ſo leſſen the Multitude of Prieſts, ſo neceſſary a Tool in the Spiritual Monarchy) yet Satan foreſaw that thereby they might be let looſe to Variety, and therefore the Stews were to be inſtituted, or at leaſt incouraged, and Concubines to be granted, as neceſſary in the caſe (which themſelves had made) and be counted leſs impure than Matrimony, though God's own Ordinance and Inſtitution. But to make it amends, it ſhould be advanced into a Sacrament for ſuch as would; and that which could confer Grace to all (excepting Prieſts and religious Perſons.) But for a further Relief of the Prieſts Celibate, they ſhould have wanton Legends, and fair Opportunities of Mortification from the private Confeſſion and ſecret Converſe with the weaker Sex. And though in ſome Countries the Laity might find a neceſſity by a Law to abridg them therein, and to conſtrain them to keep their Concubines for prevention of Inconveniences to their own Wives and Families: yet for the moſt part they would have the Law in their own Hands, and abſolve one another upon eaſy terms. Though we read indeed of ſome of late times, who having been ſo impudent as to demand the tenth night of Wives, and to avouch it unto the Biſhop himſelf to be a legitimate cure for Nuns, did not eſcape ſo eaſily; the one being burnt, and the other immured or buried alive, but more for fear than Juſtice in thoſe who did it.

But to quit my Hands of this dirty Subject, the other Palliation for Luxury, was to be the pretence of mortifying Men by *Faſtings*, and other voluntary Tormentings of Nature, by ſcourging and ſuch like Severities. But as the Wip doth not uſe to quench Sin, when of the Sinners own laying on; nor an hairy Shirt worn next the Skin, to mortify more deep and inward Corruption: So neither would Abſtinence from ſome groſſer Meats, much chaſtiſe the Appetite; which in the mean while might be gratified with more delicious Food, and entertained with choicer Junkets. As ſome have been heard to profeſs that they were ſo great Lovers of a Fiſh-Diet, that in Lent-time they have often made their Meal of roaſt Beef and Fowls in pure Humiliation and Self-Denial. So that by faſting (as ſome Men call faſting) the Pleaſure of eating is oft time rather refined than reſtrained, and the Appetite but whetted and quickned for the future.

And as for *Clothes*, (another point for Luxury to wrap it ſelf in) the Purple and Scarlet, the Splendor and Ornaments of the Sove-

raign

raign Court, the rich Jewels, Pearls, and precious Stones, wherewith the Temples, together with the Altars and Images in them, would be decked and adorned, might be ſufficient Conſolation againſt creeping to the Croſs in Sackcloth and Aſhes, and waſhing the Feet of the poor once a Year, that their own may be kiſſed all the Year after.

And though ſome Orders ſhould go meanly clad, yet there might be a Pleaſure even in that, if affected; and though they might with the Cynick be ἔξω ῥύπαρὸι, yet ἔνδον ὁλοπερφυροι; and their Souls wear Scarlet, while their Bodies were clad in Rags and Ruſſet.

But *Covetouſneſs* muſt not be forgot, but be allowed its Place and Appartment in this new Model and Myſtery of Iniquity, [2 *Pet.* 2. 3. *Rev.* 18. 11, 12, 13.] The Goſpel indeed had ſpoken ſevere things againſt Covetouſneſs and Worldly-mindedneſs, and having called Men out of the World, required them to leave behind them, and abſtract their Minds from all the Riches and Furniture of it, and to ſet their Minds on things above, to have their Converſations in Heaven, and there to ſeek after a more enduring Subſtance, and the true Riches. But this ſeemed an hard Chapter to worldly and earthly Minds; and therefore a way was to be found out, wherein Men might either poſſeſs Wealth under an outward Profeſſion of Poverty, and the having nothing; or elſe with a bold Face outbrave the Goſpel-Rules, and deſpiſe the meanneſs of primitive Chriſtianity, and deride even St *Peter*'s Folly, and beggerly Motto, *Silver and Gold have I none.*

They might pretend to run from the World, to decoy it into their Cells; and diſclaim it in publick, that they may with the more eaſe injoy it in a Corner; *& fugit ad Salices*——.

To ſlake which immortal Thirſt after Rices, the Veins of all *Europe* muſt be ſucked, and thoſe of *India* come ſwimming in, (though at ſecond hand) to make that affluence, and *Euphrates* of Gold and Silver, which might be a ſufficient Supply for *Babylon the Great.*

It would be a Labour worth a good deal, but to reckon up all the ſeveral Streams, which empty themſelves into this great Channel; But I ſhall name only ſome few of them. *1ſt.* It might be foreſeen that a great Revenue might be raiſed by a voluntary Benevolence from Princes, and other great Men of the World, who would be glad to beſtow ſome of their Wealth at parting with the World, that they might thereby make ſome Amends for the Sins by which they got it, and purchaſe to themſelves an Elbow-Chair in Heaven; which they could believe to be feaſible by ſeeing the Porter St. *Peter*

or

or his Succeſſor, who kept the Keys. Yea, a Pretence to a Donation would in tract of time create a kind of Title by Cuſtom and Preſcription, eſpecially of as much as they could get and keep Poſſeſſion of; and when this way would reach no further, it might be pieced out, by taking what would not be given; and this might be effected by many ways and means. As for Inſtance, by Sale of *Red-hats* to ſuch Princes as had a mind to prefer a Friend, or provide themſelves of a Proctor; alſo by ſale of other *Court-Offices*. By *Sainting* of ſome, when any Nation deſired to worſhip their own Country-man and Acquaintance, that he might more naturally ſuperintend their particular Concernments. By ſetting up a *Purgatory* to caſt Men into a Sweat, that they might be well paid for rubbing of them dry again, by a Pardon fringed with a Multitude of Malles; by making *Penal Laws* on purpoſe to be diſpenſed with at greater rates. By Sale of Eccleſiaſtical *Benefices* in their own beſtowing, which they might charge with annual Penſions, and then releaſe at five Years purchaſe; and exacting Fees of all other Benefices, as *Firſt-Fruits*, *Tenths*, and other Perquiſites from the ſmaller ſort; but from *Biſhopricks*, for their Palls, Inveſtitures, *&c.* an unknown Sum might come in from all Countries; as alſo for *Vacancies* of Collegiate Churches, and Abbies, and many more, too tedious to be recited.

By ſuch ways and means were the Triumvirate of Pride, Luſt and Covetouſneſs to be provided for. But for the perfecting of the Myſtery of Iniquity, and the making it work more effectually, there were a couple more of Ingredients to be added, which are indeed the very *Cremor Tartari*, the Syſtole and Diaſtole of the Devil's Heart, and the neceſſary Inſtruments of his Polity, *Fraud* and *Cruelty*. And as himſelf was a Lier and Murderer from the beginning; ſo theſe two Characters of Antiquity could not be ſpared, to make the Myſtery look like its Author. There are two principal Lineaments of the Image of God, which the Goſpel came to repair in Man, Truth and Love; that ſo he might be renewed after the Image of him that created him, who is called *Truth*, and cannot lie; and alſo *Love*: which two things are eſpecially recommended in Scripture, as the main Characters of an Evangelical Spirit and Converſation, and therefore Satan could not make his Myſtery enough Antichriſtian, unleſs he ſhould extirpate theſe two out of his Common-Wealth, by implanting their Contraries, *Fraud* and *Cruelty*, in the Minds of all his cordial Subjects, but eſpecially thoſe who ſhould have the Management of his Kingdom and Affairs.

The *Firſt* whereof was indiſpenſibly neceſſary for carrying on the Myſtery, both for keeping it ſecret, and trapanning Men into Principles and Practices ſo directly contrary to the Doctrine of the Goſpel, and that under a Pretence of complying with it. And therefore the Apoſtle tells us aforehand, That *the coming of the wicked One ſhould be after the working of Satan, with lying Wonders, and all Deceivableneſs of Unrighteouſneſs*, [2 Theſſ. 2. 8, 9.] *Speaking Lies in Hypocriſy* [1 *Tim.* 4. 2.] being a *ſeducing Spirit*. The Myſtery of Iniquity was to be carried on, ἐν ὑποκρισει ψευδολόγων, through the Hypocriſy of Liars; who being Liars, ſhould pretend to Truth: and therefore ſo long as they made uſe of her Garment, they were to have no further regard to her ſelf, either in Thought, Word, or Deed; but having ſeared Conſciences, to give up themſelves to believe what they once knew to be falſe; and to ſpare no Lies, nor falſe Oaths, Circumventions, Treacheries nor Treaſons; having firſt perſuaded themſelves, that nothing can be Sin which is ſerviceable to their Holy Deſigns. In Purſuance whereof fabulous Legends, new Doctrines, and new Articles of Faith were to be minted, and digged up out of that dark and bottomleſs Pit of Tradition, and varniſhed over with a ſeeming Gloſs of wreſted Scripture. Councils were to be packed, true Authors corrupted, and falſe ones ſuborned. And to warrant all, there ſhould be an Order of Men inſtituted; who by their diſputacious Subtilty ſhould duel all Oppoſers, and ſpin out Truth into ſo fine a Thread, that few Eyes ſhould be able to diſcern what colour it was of; and then weave it into a Cobweb-Lawn or Spiders Web, rarefying Faith into vain Speculations, and ſnarling the plain Truth into a thouſand Perplexities, till it can neither be believed nor underſtood.

And as for *Cruelty*, thereby they ſhould fight Satan's Quarrel with the Seed of the Woman, and gratify their own Principle, which he ſhould infuſe into them, of Hatred and Revenge. And ſeeing the Myſtery of Iniquity was to be carried on againſt all Right and Reaſon, it was like to meet with oppoſition enough from others, who would adhere to ſuch Principles; and therefore all thoſe ſoft and fooliſh Principles of Love, Pity and Humanity, were to be thrown over-board, and all the Methods and Modes of Cruelty were to be deviſed and made uſe of for the tormenting, and deſtruction of all ſuch as ſhould either oppoſe, or not comply with the great Silver Diana, and the Golden Image which Satan ſhould ſet up for himſelf to be worſhipped by; who having great Wrath againſt the Woman, ſhall make War againſt the Remnant of her Seed, which

which keep the Commandments of God, and have the Teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt [*Rev.* 12. 17. *chap.* 16. 6. *chap.* 17. 6. *chap.* 18. 24.]

Thus have we briefly ſeen how *Satan* hath contrived his Myſtery of Iniquity, ſo that it ſhould not only dethrone *Jeſus Chriſt* from his Worſhip, and ſupplant him in all his Offices, but alſo gratify and uphold Sin and Corruption; (which he came to ſave us from, and heal us of) and thereby revive his Kingdom in Myſtery and Maſquerade, and deſtroy Millions of precious Souls to all Eternity.

But now perhaps, it will not be amiſs to take a ſhort and particular View of ſeveral Doctrines of our Chriſtian Faith, and Ordinances of Chriſt; and obſerve how ſubtily the old Serpent contrived to pervert them; that he might make them ſubſervient to the ſeveral Intereſts of his Kingdom of Darkneſs, and the Polices thereof.

Firſt, for *Preaching the Goſpel*, which is the means of the Propagation and Edification of the Church, and ſaving the Souls of Men; this the Devil knew might be made a *Gladius Delphicus*, and was capable of being turned upon the Goſpel it ſelf, by making the Pulpit a Mortar-Piece to diſcharge his Granado's from, and to caſt his fiery Darts of Sedition, and damnable Hereſies, among the People; by taking Care that when it was uſed, the Doctrine might be corrupted by a preverting Gloſs, and by mixing with it Legends and feigned Miracles, and cunningly deviſed Fables, to keep the People ignorant, and from the ſight and knowledg of the Scriptures, leſt they ſhould know too much, and diſcover his Errors; leſt they ſhould be wiſer than their Prieſts, and ſo deſpiſe them; who ſhould have neither parts nor means for Learning, which might recommend them; but be, like Prieſt, like People; Prieſts of the meaneſt of the People, and the People made pliable to believe any Doctrine that ſhould be offered to them, and readily practiſe whatſoever Superſtition or Idolatry ſhould be injoined; and while Ignorance is the Mother of Devotion, the Devotion muſt needs prove Blind, and never be able to grope the way to Heaven; and yet ſo it muſt needs be, while Prayers are recited in an unknown Tongue.

But becauſe it might be too great a Mortification of Mens Curioſity to let them ſee no further then their Noſes, therefore he reſolved to furniſh them with Prophecies of his own dictating, whereby they might be amuſed, without danger of being made wiſer

or better by them, as they might be by the Scriptures; And remembring how his heathen Romans were wont to have their Curiosity hushed with the lullaby of the Theater; he resolved to entertain Christians with Images and fine Pictures on the Church-Walls and Windows, and Theatrical Representations of Gospel-History, which should be instead of Scripture to them, and were like to be taking with those empty Souls, who knew no better.

Then for the *Sacraments*, they might be easily laid lower in esteem, by joining others in Commission with them, which should be so slightly grounded, that People might be tempted to suspect the true Coin, as if of no better Metal; or else think that Men could make Sacraments, and add Grace to accompany them. But as for the sealing and assuring Power of them, it should be enervated, by suspending their Efficacy upon the Intention of the Priest, which none living but himself could be assured of without a Divine Revelation; and therefore not know but they might be Idolaters in worshipping an unconsecrated Wafer; nor whether they had so much as been baptized or no. And besides, the Sacraments were capable of being corrupted by superstitious Ceremonies, and by impious Uses and Applications; *viz.* Baptism might either be totally rejected, as childish and ridiculous, or neglected and deferred; or, by misapplying it to Persons against their Wills, or to the Ignorant, or unduly to the Children of Unbelievers; or else defiling it, by adding to it Creame or Spittle, and Exorcisms; or shamefully profaning of it, by Christening of Bells, *&c.*

The *Eucharist* might be perverted by worshipping of the Elements instead of Christ himself, giving the Priest a power to make his Maker, which would advance the Priesthood into Admiration, and ballance other just Causes of Contempt, and make the People beholden to him for his Intention, which alone could keep them from being gross Idolaters. By abusing it as an Amulet to Preserve, or an Opportunity to Poison; a Charm to Exorcise, or a Pawn for securing a Debt, thereby turning the Host into a Hostage; and the Natural Body of Christ (as they should believe it to be) into Gold or Silver, by a strange kind of Retransubstantiation. (Which a certain Emperor is recorded to have done.)

However, while this sacred or solemn Mystery, instituted by our Saviour's dying Breath, and bequeathed as a Legacy to his beloved Spouse (whom he purchased with his own Blood) as a Divine means of her Comfort and Union, shall become the μῦλον ἐφιδ@ν, matter

matter of Contention, and occaſion of the moſt mortal hatred that *Satan* himſelf could infuſe into the Minds of Men: and while the due Commemoration of *Chriſt's* moſt Precious Death, ſhall be made to many Men the cauſe of their own; while, I ſay, this ſacred Myſtery ſhall be thus perverted to contrary Ends, the Devil will triumph, as having turned it into a *Myſtery of Iniquity*, to the defeating of the Goſpel, eſpecially while ſo many Men, by unworthy receiving, do eat and drink their own Damnation, and give poſſeſſion of themſelves unto *Satan* by the livery and ſeiſin of the Sop.

And as for that Authority and *Power of the Keys* which *Chriſt* left with his Church, *Satan* knew how to ſerve himſelf of it, for excluding out of the viſible Church thoſe of the Houſhold of Faith, and the letting in of Thieves and Robbers. How to make it a Pick-lock to Mens Purſes and Conſciences, and to imploy it upon trivial and pecuniary Errands; which would render it 'ith' mean while not only uſeleſs to its proper End, but alſo pernicious, by abſolving Men into Preſumption.

Yea and the Government of the Church, ordained for the Union, Order, Safety, and Edification of it, might be in a great meaſure defeated, by reducing the choice of the Perſons into the Hands of Temporal great Ones, of whom while few would be good Men, the Perſons choſen would likely be accordingly; and by intoxicating their Minds with Temporal Riches and Honours, which would make them think their primitive Duty too far below them, and have neither care nor leiſure to mind it. And laſtly, by making their Precincts ſo large, that it would be impoſſible for any one Man (though never ſo Good, Able, and Diligent) to adminiſter one of them as he ought. And all this might be brought about under the ſpecious pretence of the flouriſhing Condition of the Church, and its having Princes for its nurſing Fathers. And as for thoſe bleſſed Ends of this Inſtitution, above mentioned; while ſome ſhould delight themſelves in impoſing upon others their own Opinions and Commands in matters doubtful or needleſs; and others pleaſe themſelves as much in a pertinacious holding and propagating of their contrary Opinions, and a ſturdy noncompliance with what they are convinced to be lawful, becauſe they cannot have all they deſire; both Sorts would be ſo ſtiffly ſet upon having their own Wills, and maintaining their own Reputations, as to forget that they were Brethren, and to neglect the Peace of the Church, which

which Christ their common Saviour purchas'd with his own Blood. But yet in the mean while (even in all Ages) truly gracious, and humble Persons would indeavour to keep their Peace with God, studying and believing plain Truths, and faithfully practising all their known Duties, to have Peace in themselves, and to shew forth a brotherly-Love unto others, yielding as much as is possible for Publick Peace sake. According to St. *Paul's* Exhortation, *Rom.* 12. 18. *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all Men*; in patience possessing their own Souls, and so with a silent meekness slip through the World, and lay hold on eternal Life, leaving others behind them to question and commune with their own Hearts, about their own Share and Interest in that sweet and blessed Legacy of our dying Lord, *John* 14. 27. *Peace I leave with you, my Peace I give unto you.* And to bethink themselves what account they can hereafter give unto him of that great *Depositum.*

And when all Church-censures, how duly soever dispensed, and the Municipal Laws of particular Nations (whereby the loose Spirits of Men were held to their Duty, and to the observance of the Divine Law of both Tables) shall be Suspended and Despensed withal, and thereby Men turned loose, to do every Man what is right (or wrong) in his own Eyes, and to follow the inclination of his own Mind; into how forlorn a Condition the Church and Worship of God must needs be reduced, any considering Man may easily apprehend.

When a justifying Faith shall be reduced to the same form with that of the Devils; Assurance of Salvation be branded for Presumption, and Men discouraged from making their Calling and Election sure, in spight of the Apostle's Exhortation; when Sin shall be pardoned for Money, or of course; when Repentance (which is a godly and hearty sorrow for Sin, joined with an abhorrence and forsaking of it) shall be laid aside, as too harsh for the delicate Flesh, and instead thereof, an hanging down the Head, a pale and distorted Countenance, in a few Grimases, the saying by rote a few *Paters* and *Aves*, the chastising of the Body by some outward Severities, rather than part with the Sin of the Soul; a Whip and a lousy Coat; and denying themselves something which they do not much care for, shall be accounted the only Self-denial and Mortification a-la-mode: When there shall be no Charity left but that of Almes, and that applied for vain Glory, given with the sound of the Trumpet, and mostly

to maintain a lazy Superſtition, whilſt the ſame Perſons ſhall have ſo little true Charity or Mercy, as to imbrue their hands in the Blood and Tears of the true Members of Jeſus Chriſt. When Charity ſhall grow cold, and Perſecution hot, and Men become Lovers of themſelves, of their Pleaſures and Riches more than of God, abandoning themſelves to all manner of Licentiouſneſs, and making it the chief of their care to make Proviſion for the Fleſh: Then may Men come to be aſſured that the *Myſtery of Iniquity* is buſily at work in the World; as the Apoſtle tells us it had begun in his days. But how much of it hath been ſince executed and wrought off, and the woful Effects which it hath produced, I ſhall leave to the Hiſtories of the Church in all Ages to report, and to the Judgment of all wiſe Men to make the Application.

But let every Nation and Church, and Party of Men, on which any of theſe Corruptions ſhall be found, bear its own Burthen; repent and reform what it finds amiſs in it ſelf, and never dream of excuſing it ſelf, by caſting all the Blame upon others: for it is moſt certain that the *Myſtery of Iniquity* is as large as the Dominion of Sin, and Kingdom of Darkneſs is within the viſible Church, and under the Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Religion; and there is not a Nation under Heaven, wherein the Devil hath not ten times more of real Subjects than Jeſus Chriſt.

FINIS.

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